At 15, you could find SK8 in his room writing lyrics, and by his sophomore year, you could find him handing out CDs in high school. The 23-year-old moved to Los Angeles from Omaha, Nebraska and linked with the venerable Taylor Gang, first breaking in the mainstream with his 2020 EP *sk8sounds*. Signing to Atlantic Records in 2018 and releasing a string of singles in 2019, SK8 began building a dedicated fanbase of dreamers who related to his message of seizing every moment long before his eventual move to LA.

Born to a Lebanese father who introduced SK8 to the shifting sounds of Bob Marley, his childhood was a blend of basketball—a passion shared by him and his father—attending church services and listening to classic reggae. Soon after, 50 Cent, Lil Wayne, Nelly and Wiz Khalifa would enter the rotation of influences. While music was a clear passion for him from an early age, it wasn’t until he saw Wiz live in concert in 2011 that SK8 realized he, too, could change lives from the stage. Following the concert, SK8—which derives from a childhood nickname given to him by his mother—began to spit over YouTube beats, finding his sound from webpage to webpage.

By 2015, SK8 had opened for Lil Wayne, 2 Chainz, and Rae Sremmurd and scored an RIAA certified-gold record with his Jack & Jack collaboration, “Like That.” It was time to move from homely Nebraska to Los Angeles and really take music by storm. In 2016, SK8 dropped three projects, establishing himself as prolific and relentless in the pursuit of his signature sound. That same year, SK8 was the only indie artist nominated for a Teen Choice Award. In early 2018, SK8 connected with Taylor Gang Management, co-founded his own imprint, Alignment, and formally signed a Joint Venture with Atlantic Records via James McMillan’s ART@WAR. Dedicated to spreading love through being honest about his struggles, SK8’s label ventures gave him a megaphone to amplify his positive message to the masses.

In 2021, with the release of his upcoming project, *Pages*, SK8 truly steps into his own. As a metaphor, the project symbolizes tearing a guttural page out of SK8’s private journal – a hyper-specific coming-of-age story made for listeners everywhere who are struggling to find their own way. With more punk influence than ever before, SK8 drums up themes of rebellion, broken relationships, teenage nostalgia, and that unending need to rage against systems built to curtail his personal light. The choppy guitars of opener, “Pages” say it all. *Pages* is music made by a man with a heart of gold and desperate need to massage out his angst.

“This project highlights the struggles of being in a relationship and also following your dreams,” SK8 says of *Pages*. The project is meant to relate to anyone getting discouraged from their passions. While “One Day” soars, it’s one of the hardest for SK8 to listen to as he recalls the dark place he was in mentally. “A lot of people can relate to that,” he says of the hook, which details owning up to your mistakes. SK8 explains the main message of *Pages* is about pushing through your failures to grow into who you are.

On the hip-hop infused “Famous,” SK8 returns to the bedrock of his *sk8sounds* EP with an updated coat of polish. The minor chords of “Over It” propel its sullen tone as SK8 sings of getting away and forgetting. “Over It” features a lilted delivery, drenched in an attractive moodiness. The visceral “Fuck” drums up memories of basement shows and throwing elbows in a pre-COVID world while the band in the middle of the room belts out your every last teenage wish. In all, *Pages* is a nine-track collection of genre-fusing shared memories.

“You’re always turning the page, and it’s about not looking back,” SK8 concludes assuredly. “No matter what happens, we can still all get on the same page. Whether we’re going through something, we can always still figure things out through communication. If you really want something, you gotta go for it. You gotta *say* it. If you get aligned with everything in your life, you’ll be alright.”